

the spending of this money. I submit that this Government should themselves undertake to expend this money, and should themselves assume all responsibility in that connection.

There is quite a difference between a transcontinental highway and the rural highway or a township or county road. I do not doubt that the idea of building a transcontinental highway is a capital one. It will link up all the principal manufacturing towns throughout the Dominion, develop a new transportation system and create a settlement along this highway that should be very beneficial to the development of the country. It is another method of development. We have our transcontinental steam railways; we are now electrifying many railway lines, and we should construct a highway for motors, commercial and pleasure. But that would be an entirely different road from that which has been built by the provinces or from that which would be generally used by the provinces. We should not be in too big a hurry to hand this money over to the provinces. The Government would be well advised in following my suggestion that they themselves take the full responsibility for the construction of such a highway.

This expenditure of \$20,000,000 is proposed, first, to assist the unemployed returned soldier, and, second, to assist the unemployed generally. How will that work out? First, we call upon the returned soldier who is unemployed and we say to him: "Here is construction work; here is employment for you." But this work—perhaps seventy per cent of it—is pick and shovel work, and the soldier will likely say: "I am not used to pick and shovel work, and I do not propose to take up that kind of work for a living." I think that the majority of the soldiers will decline to do that kind of work.

Then, in the towns and cities, there are thousands of men who are unemployed. You say to them: "Here is an expenditure of millions; by applying you can get employment." What will the answer be? I am inclined to think that the unemployed man in the city will say: "My family is in the city; all my interests are there; I do not desire to go ten, fifteen, twenty, or fifty miles from my home to do pick and shovel work." I think, therefore, he will decline to become a pick and shovel man.

Now, the next class you will draw from—and this is serious as I see it—is that of the men in the villages who are labourers or the men on the farm who work from ten

to twelve hours a day, possibly getting \$2.50 a day. The latter will say to his associates: "I think we had better give up this work on the farm; it is heavy work; the hours are long and the pay small. We can go to the highways commission and get \$3.50 to \$4 a day, and work only eight hours each day." Now, in this way you are drawing upon those who are engaged upon production, which is serious. We all know the difficulties that have been experienced in the last four or five years in connection with production on the farms. If therefore, in carrying out this scheme you draw from that section of the community, instead of working a benefit to our country in the way of production of foodstuffs, we shall be injuring it. You may be able to check that up by close inquiry and registration; but will the commission be so particular as that? Or will they circulate this money irrespective of the community that they draw from the necessary labour? We want to give employment to the unemployed; we want to circulate this money, but we do not want to draw from these various classes that I have mentioned, to the disadvantage of the Dominion. If we cannot succeed in building these highways without drawing upon rural communities in the employment of labour, then it is my view that we should not go on with that expenditure.

The Government should be congratulated for offering to the provinces \$25,000,000 for the purpose of securing better housing conditions in the large cities, and incidentally reducing unemployment. Many houses in the large cities are not as sanitary and up-to-date as they should be. Toronto has had some experience in housing matters, some houses having been built by a company, but I would say that the undertaking was a failure.

I understand that a commission of the best business men in Toronto has been appointed, composed of men in whom we have every confidence, and who would not go into this if they did not think it would be a success. The difference between the two plans would be this: About ten years ago, when there was a house famine, an agitation was started that the city should go into the housing business. The city decided that if a company was formed, they would guarantee bonds to the extent of \$1,000,000 for the housing company, and they would give fifteen per cent of that, or \$150,000. The company was accordingly organized, got its charter and went into the housing business. The method of building, however, was not modern, nor was it in the interest of the housing of many people. They took two pieces of ground, with a total area

[Mr. Foster.]